

survivors, but found remains of three to four crew members. The area was considered very hostile and the rescue team's time on the ground was limited by available fuel in the hovering helicopter. The team recovered the identifiable remains and left the crash site when the helicopter's remaining fuel supply necessitated departure.

The remains recovered were later identified as those of the first co-pilot.

The field commander's decision to declare the crew to be dead was made on February 22, 1973. His decision was based on the circumstances of the loss and the report on the condition of the aircraft made by the rescue team. Although the aircraft was equipped with Ultra High Frequency, Very High Frequency and High Frequency radio, no distress call was received. Each crew member carried a survival radio preset to operate on emergency frequency, but none were activated at the time of the crash. Most crews flew without wearing their survival equipment. In an emergency, it would have been necessary to don the equipment and open

the exit door, actions which are made difficult if the plane has been hit and is not in level flight. When the aircraft was found, it was almost totally destroyed. The chances of survival were extremely remote.

Shortly after the loss of this aircraft, an intelligence source that may not be further identified, reported that enemy forces were transporting four captured men who may have been American pilots about 65 kilometers from the crash site. However, no identity or nationality was specified. It is not possible to determine whether or not that report pertained to crew members of the EC-47 aircraft lost on February 5, 1973. No further intelligence reports of any kind were received as to the location or disposition of the four captured men mentioned in the intelligence report. The names of the seven crew members whose bodies were not recovered were included on lists provided to the Vietnamese in May 73, June 74 and April 75 and lists provided to the Laos in July 73 and June, October and November 1974.